

Black-eared Cuckoo in the Perth Metropolitan Area.—A Black-eared Cuckoo (*Chrysococcyx osculans*), in perfect feather and condition, was brought to the Zoological Gardens, South Perth, on May 16 1976 from a house in Yokine where it had been captured after it suffered some concussion on flying into a closed window. It was kept in the zoo for a few days and then delivered to C. A. Nicholls who tended it for some two weeks before its release at Regan's Ford.

It has long been held, based on a reference by W. B. Alexander (*Emu*, 20, 1921: 164), that there was one previous record of this species from Perth. This provenance is now considered doubtful and the Yokine specimen stands as the only certain record from the Perth metropolitan area.

We asked Dr. Glen Storr, of the Western Australian Museum, for further particulars of the specimen mentioned by Alexander and he has replied as follows: "The specimen of Black-eared Cuckoo that Alexander referred to seems no longer to exist. It was presumably the specimen registered in the 'Catalogue of the Museum Perth No. 1' in 1896 as coming from Perth and obtained from one 'Heustern' (that is how I decipher it). This old catalogue was basically an index to the specimens on display; it was concerned with what showcase the specimen was placed in, rather than where, when and by whom it was collected. I therefore doubt whether much significance can be attached to the locality 'Perth'. We have searched the correspondence for 1896 but found no reference to a Black-eared Cuckoo."

—C. A. NICHOLLS, T. SPENCE and A. G. THORPE.

Aerobatics of the White-tailed Black Cockatoo in hot air pillars.—On our property in the Bickley Valley, six km east of Kalamunda, Western Australia (116° 06'E; 32°S) some clearing of bushland had taken place over the summer of 1975. Burning was used to remove the stacked timber over May 1975. On May 8 burning-off of some of the timber led to a fire spreading up the inside of a large 15-20 metre Marri (*Eucalyptus calophylla*) that had been left for its majestic size and beauty. However the fire formed a vent up the hollow trunk of the tree which because of its size continued to burn for several days.

At this time of the year large and small groups of White-tailed Black Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus baudini*) move freely through the forested areas of the Bickley Valley feeding mainly on the blossoms and newly forming nuts of the eucalypts. A group of five or six cockatoos found the fire in the gum tree at about 8.30 a.m. on May 9, 1975. The weather was cold and cloudy but with little wind. The birds settled in the area perched around the rim of the upper hole in the main trunk, obviously making use of the warmth. For some time they ruffled their feathers and preened themselves. The most interesting activity (by the birds) was the use of the hot air pillar above the tree for aerobatics. This was most spectacular with the birds flying to the top of the air pillar and somersaulting down in full flight with tumbling characteristics of the tumbler pigeon. This would be over some distance of 4-5 metres and down to the top of the tree vent itself. More than one bird would perform at the same time. Furthermore, the birds would also fly in and out of the updraft, created by the fire, gliding both up and down the air pillar.

The birds were very noisy and continued in the above activities for at least three-quarters of an hour before wandering off through the bush to the North East.

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